

Message Text

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ACTION IO-14

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FM AMEMBASSY PARIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1255

INFO: RUFHOL/AMEMBASSY BONN 3113

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C O N F I D E N T I A L PARIS 18504

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SF, PFOR

SUBJECT: POSSIBLE EXCLUSION OF SOUTH AFRICA FROM UN

REF: STATE 161371

1. SUMMARY. THE QUAI VIEWS PROSPECTS FOR SA IN 29TH GA MUCH AS WE DO. WHILE BOUTEFLIKA APPRECIATES HIS RESPONSIBILITIES AS GA PRESIDENT, THE DANGER EXISTS THAT HE WILL REVERSE THE HAMBRO RULING. FRENCH POSITION IN ANY SC VOTE UNCERTAIN AND WILL BE DETERMINED AT LAST MOMENT. FRENCH SEE NO WAY SIGNIFICANTLY TO INFLUENCE AFRICAN ACTION ON SA IN THE GA THIS FALL. END SUMMARY.

2. WE DISCUSSED THE PROBLEM OF SOUTH AFRICA AT THE UN WITH QUAI ACTING DIRECTOR FOR UN AFFAIRS BEAUX AND QUAI SOUTH AFRICAN SPECIALIST JACQUES MASSENET, JULY 30, INCLUDING THE LIKELIHOOD OF A STRONG AFRICAN EFFORT TO OUST S.A. THIS FALL.

3. BEAUX SAID FONMIN SOUVAGNARGUES HAS DISCUSSED
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SOUTH AFRICA IN THE GA WITH ALGERIAN FONMIN BOUTEFLIKA.

THE FRENCH HAVE THE IMPRESSION THAT BOUTEFLIKA FULLY RECOGNIZES HIS RESPONSIBILITY AS GA PRESIDENT TO AVOID BRINGING PREJUDICE TO THE INSTITUTION OF THE PRESIDENCY AND THAT HE WOULD OPEN HIMSELF TO CRITICISM WERE HE TO REVERSE THE HAMBRO RULING. THE FRENCH THINK, HOWEVER, THAT PRESSURES FROM THE OAU AND OTHERS BASED ON THE MOGADISCIO DECISIONS WHICH BOUTEFLIKA HIMSELF ENDORSED CREATE A REAL DANGER THAT HE WILL NOT FOLLOW THE HAMBRO PRECEDENT. BEAUX SUGGESTED THAT THE AFRICANS MIGHT RESORT TO A POSSIBLE REFINEMENT OF THE SCENARIO: BY PRE-AGREEMENT WITH THE AFRICANS, BOUTEFLIKA WOULD RULE AS DID HIS PREDECESSORS AND THEN THE GA WOULD VOTE TO OVERRIDE HIS DECISION. THE FRENCH INTEND TO MAKE NO FURTHER APPROACH TO THE ALGERIAN FONMIN AND ARE SKEPTICAL ABOUT THE CHANCES FOR SUCCESS OF AN APPROACH BY ANYONE ELSE, ALTHOUGH BEAUX THOUGHT AN AMERICAN, GERMAN OR BELGIAN TRY COULD DO NO HARM.

4. BEAUX SAID FRANCE WILL DOUBTLESS VOTE AGAINST ANY GA MOVE QUESTIONING SOUTH AFRICAN CREDENTIALS. THE CRUNCH WOULD COME, HE SAID, IF THE SC BECOMES INVOLVED. THE FRENCH POSITION THERE WOULD DEPEND SIGNIFICANTLY ON THE WORDING OF THE RESOLUTION. ON A SIMPLE EXPULSION RESOLUTION, A FRENCH VETO IS UNLIKELY ALTHOUGH STILL POSSIBLE. A RESOLUTION LABELING SOUTH AFRICA AS "A THREAT TO THE PEACE" WOULD INCREASE CHANCES FOR A FRENCH VETO AND ANY MENTION OF SANCTIONS WOULD MAKE IT DIFFICULT FOR FRANCE NOT TO VETO. IN ANY CASE, THE FINAL FRENCH POSITION WILL BE DECIDED AT THE HIGHEST LEVELS AT THE TIME OF THE VOTE. THE FRENCH HAVE THE IMPRESSION THAT THE UK IS UNLIKELY TO VETO WHILE THE FRENCH POSITION, BEAUX SAID, IS STILL VERY MUCH UP IN THE AIR.

5. BEAUX AND MASSENET BELIEVE THAT NO APPROACH TO ANY AFRICAN STATE WOULD DISSUADE THE AFRICANS AND THEY SEE LITTLE TO BE GAINED BY ANY SUCH EFFORT. THE FRENCH ALSO HAVE HEARD RUMORS THAT THE AFRICANS MAY DECIDE TO WAIT BEYOND THIS FALL TO PRESS THE ISSUE IN NEW YORK AND DO NOT DISCOUNT

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THE POSSIBILITY THAT THE TIMING MAY CHANGE. THEY ARE DOUBTFUL, HOWEVER, THAT THE WEO'S CAN DO ANYTHING EFFECTIVE TO ENCOURAGE POSTPONEMENT. THE ONLY POSSIBLY USEFUL PRESSURE THAT BEAUX COULD IMAGINE WAS BY THE US ON PERU WERE THE SC TO BE SEIZED OF THE QUESTION; HE ACKNOWLEDGED THE SOMEWHAT WHIMSICAL NATURE OF THE SUGGESTION.

6. BEAUX EXPRESSED THANKS FOR OUR RAISING THE QUESTION,

SOLICITED ANY NEW IDEAS WE MIGHT HAVE ON HOW TO HANDLE
THE MATTER AND PROMISED TO INFORM US IF THE FRENCH COME UP
WITH ANY NEW THOUGHTS.
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